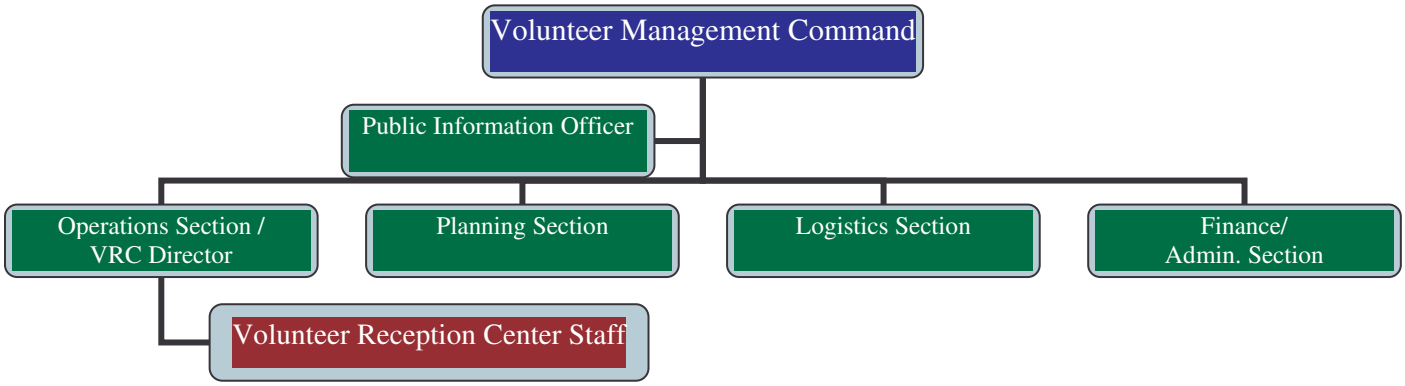
Columbia/Boone County
Disaster Volunteer Management Organizational Chart and Role Descriptions



Role: Volunteer Management Command

Sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities and has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
Filled by: Volunteer Coordinator, City of Columbia

Role: Operations Chief also the VRC Director

Filled by: Executive Director, Voluntary Action Center
Your job is to oversee the operation of the Volunteer Reception Center. You will:
• Clearly designate one entrance and one exit
• Set up the room for efficient flow of volunteers and information
• Brief and assign tasks to staff and volunteers of the center
• Monitor the operation and make changes when necessary
You should meet and thank all volunteers who help in the VRC and instruct them to sign in and out on the Volunteer Sign-in / Sign-out Record daily.

Items needed:
• ID badge
• Tables and chairs (See sample room layout for details)
• "Go Box" containing office supplies and forms to stock your VRC for the first 2-3 days
• Items on the Supplies and Equipment list

The following positions support the activities under the Operations Chief:

Role: Greeters

Ideally, you will be working with a partner, orienting volunteers inside and outside the volunteer entrance. Your job is to greet people with a friendly and firm demeanor, determine the purpose of their visit and direct them accordingly.
• If they are there to volunteer, thank them, give them a "Volunteer Instructions" sheet and ask them to fill out a registration form. When the form is completed, direct them to the next available interviewer at Station #2.
• Remind volunteers to bring their ID – they may need to go out to their vehicles to get them before starting the process.

• If they are media personnel, direct them to the Public Information Officer.
• If they are disaster survivors, refer them to the appropriate organization.
• If they have food, clothing, etc., to donate, refer them to the appropriate agency.
• Greeters, or any other VRC staff who are not otherwise busy, may want to review forms for those who are waiting in line to ensure they are properly completed.

If there is a long wait, some volunteers may not understand the reason and may become impatient. Please thank everyone for volunteering, briefly explain the process and ask everyone to be patient or to come back later.

Items needed:
• ID badge
• Sign (Station #1 Registration)
• Table and chairs for volunteers to use while filling out forms
• Supply of Volunteer Instructions handouts
• Supply of Disaster Volunteer Registration Forms
• Flag

Role: Phone Bank Staff

This role may be fulfilled by 211 and/or the on-line AidMatrix System.
You will be handling two types of calls, those from agencies requesting volunteers and those from people wanting to volunteer. The information you record about each call must be complete and in sufficient detail to facilitate matching volunteers to the needs.

When you receive a call from an agency, fill out a Request for Volunteers form while you are speaking with the agency caller. If there is a computer available for entering the needs into a database, Data Entry staff should enter the need as soon as possible.

Next, call a runner by raising the flag at your station. Ask the runner to post the volunteer request on the dry erase board in view of the Interviewers (Station #2) and then to give the Request for Volunteers form to the Data Coordinator (Station #3).

When people call to volunteer, thank them and give them the following registration options:
• If they choose to register on line, they will be e-mailed or called to discuss possible assignments and given further instructions. If the caller represents a group that wishes to volunteer together, assure them that you do need their help and ask them to be patient while you determine where they can be of most help. It might take one day or several to match them with a need, especially if they are coming from out of town. Post the caller's inquiry on the board behind the Phone Bank.
When a match (a mission) is found for that volunteer, e-mail or call them back and schedule a time for them to come to the VRC to sign their on-line registration form, pick up their referral form and ID bracelet(s), and attend a safety briefing. Make sure that the volunteer's on-line registration form is waiting with the Interviewers (Station #2) on their arrival date.
• If they choose to register in person at the VRC, they will be given instructions when they arrive.

Items needed:
• An ID Badge for each staff member
• Sign (Phone Bank)
• Two tables and four chairs
• Phones
• Supply of Request for Volunteers forms
• Pens, push pins or masking tape
• Flag

Role: Runners

Your job is to carry information from one station to another within the VRC. When a station needs you to pick up forms, restock their supplies or escort a volunteer from one place to another, they will signal you by raising the flag at their station.

Please watch carefully for this signal and respond promptly, in order to keep the information and volunteers moving smoothly through the registration and referral process. When you are asked to post a Volunteer Request on the board, write neatly and large enough so that the interviewers can see the requests clearly. After posting the request on the board, give the Request form to Data Coordination (Station #3).

Items needed:
• An ID Badge
• Dry erase marker & eraser

Role: Data Entry

Data entry may be integrated into the Elliot badging system.
Your job is to enter the information from the Volunteer Registration and Request for Volunteers forms into the database so that there is an accurate record of who participated in the recovery effort, what kinds of work they performed and when. The computer will assign a number to each Registration and Request, which must also be hand-written on the paper forms. After the initial influx of volunteers has subsided, you may have time to begin entering the referrals recorded on the Request forms and close out the completed Requests. As needed by VRC staff, print updated lists of the unfilled Requests and ask a Runner to distribute copies to Phone Bank staff, Data Coordination, Interviewers and, if requested, the VRC Director.

Even if you are familiar with the software being used by the VRC, please ask for a brief orientation before beginning your first shift. Accuracy is more important than speed.
The information you enter will be used to determine the amount of money the county will receive from the Federal Government as a result of the disaster.
If you have difficulty using the computer, please ask for help immediately. Do not attempt to fix the problem yourself.

Items needed:
• An ID Badge
• One table and two chairs
• Printer
• Pens
• Flag
• One or more computers (multiple computers should be networked to provide all users access to information on the status of volunteer requests and the availability of volunteers.)

Role: Interviewers

This may be combined with Data Agency Coordination to simplify the process.
Your job is to do a quick interview of the prospective volunteer and refer him to a job at an agency appropriate to his abilities and interests. Volunteer requests will be posted on a board in front of you (behind the volunteers being interviewed) and erased as they are filled. If the center has a computer system, you might also receive a printed list of the current needs.

Ask for the volunteer's registration form. With the volunteer, verify its completeness and accuracy, and use it as a guide from which to inquire more about the volunteer's skills. At the conclusion of the interview, keep his registration form. When the volunteer accepts an assignment, fill out a Referral form, give it to the volunteer and instruct him to report to Data Coordination (Station #3).

Before signaling the Greeter that you are ready for another interview, take a minute to jot down in the "Notes" section anything about the volunteer you feel is important, that the volunteer did not include on

his registration form (a special skill, an obvious physical limitation, etc.) If your center decides to use the blind field labeled "Office Use Only," check the appropriate box. Place his registration form in the bin or file.
Appropriate use of the "Office Use Only" field should be determined by the VRC Director, possibly with input from the local ESF-15 lead agency. It is intended to provide acustomizable "blind" field in which special information canbe noted about volunteers. If, for future referral of that volunteer,it would be helpful to know his general level of ability to work independently, boxes 1-5 could be coded: 1. Learns quickly, able to supervise the activities of others; 2. Would work well independently…5. Needs close supervision. A drawback to this kind of field is that interviewers may not be able to judge the appropriate entry from only a short interview.The advantage is that a volunteer with an obvious special ability or limitation can be utilized to his full potential or placed in a relatively low-risk, closely supervised environment.

Key points to remember are:
• Disaster registration differs from a "normal" volunteer intake – there is less time to try to fit each volunteer into an ideal assignment.
• Refer the volunteer on the spot if possible – it may be impossible to contact him later. If the volunteer has special training or unusual skills that you think might be needed soon, ask him to wait in the sitting area and to check the volunteer request board for new requests for their specialized skills.
• It is likely that some volunteers will exhibit the stress of the disaster – an extra measure of patience and understanding is needed.
• Be sure to watch for volunteers who would be effective working in the Volunteer Reception Center.
• You may be called upon to train volunteers to assist with the interviewing.
• It may be wise to have preprinted information with the agency, assignment, location and other details to hand to volunteers as they are placed so this information doesn't need to be re-written by hand multiple times.

Items needed:
• An ID Badge for each interviewer
• Sign (Station #2 Interviews)
• Two tables and eight chairs that will allow four interviewers to sit across from the four new volunteers they are interviewing
• Supply of Referral forms
• Bin or file in which to keep the Volunteer Registration Forms
• Pens
• Flag

Role: Data Coordinator

This position may be combined with the Interviewer.
Your job is to match the Referral forms to the Requests and to close out the Requests when they have been filled or are no longer needed. You may have to call an agency contact to clarify the agency's Request. When you speak with an agency contact, record the information on the Request form in the section called "Follow-up Contacts with Requesting Agency."

If a volunteer who has been interviewed but not referred approaches your station, thank them for coming and ask them to please wait in the sitting area in the center of the room. When a volunteer brings you his Referral, enter his name and the date of the referral on the Request form to which he was referred. Place your initials on his Referral form. If you have time, call the agency contact to let him know who or how many volunteers have been referred.

Confirm with the agency contact whether you should continue referring volunteers or close out the request. When the request has been filled, raise your flag to call a runner and ask him to remove that request from the board.

If your station has a computer, enter the date and reason the request was closed (completed, no longer needed, etc.) at the bottom of the Request form. Place open Requests in one bin and closed Requests in the other, in either numerical order or alphabetically by agency.
It may be wise to have preprinted information with the agency, assignment, location and other details to hand to volunteers as they are placed so this information doesn't need to be re-written by hand multiple times.

Items needed:
• An ID Badge for each staff member
• Sign (Station #3 Data Coordination)
• Two tables and four chairs
• Two bins – one for open Requests and one for closed out Requests
• Phone
• Pens
• Computer, if available, networked to the computers at the Phone Bank station
• Flag

Role: Volunteer ID Staff

This role will involve use of the Elliot badging system. Staff and/or volunteers in this role may receive training prior to the event.
Ask if the volunteers have been referred to a volunteer position yet. If they have not been referred, thank them for coming and ask them to please wait in the sitting area in the center of the room.
If they have been referred, clearly write the name of the volunteer, the dates to be worked and the name of the agency or ESF to which the volunteer was referred, as shown on their Referral slip, on the white portion of an ID wristband. Place the ID wristband securely on the volunteer's wrist.
Explain to the volunteers that the ID will be "good" only for the date(s) written on the band. Authorities will not permit them to enter any of the disaster recovery areas on any other day, without a current ID wristband. If volunteers plan to work more than one day, you may write the beginning and ending dates of their service. Thank them for coming and direct them to Station #5 Safety Training.

Items needed:
• An ID Badge
• Two tables and four chairs
• Sign (Station #4 Volunteer I.D. Tags)
• Supply of volunteer ID wristbands
• Markers
• Scissors
• Flag

Role: Safety Trainers

Your job is to brief all new volunteers on what to expect at their job sites, how to be safe while volunteering and how to take good care of themselves after their experience. When a small group has gathered, thank the volunteers for offering to help. Pass around a clipboard with an attendance sheet and check to be sure that all participants have signed it.

Read the entire Safety Training sheet slowly, emphasizing the importance of following supervisors' instructions at the work site. Encourage everyone to attend a debriefing, if available, at the end of their shift. Ask if there are any questions. If a question arises to which you do not know the answer, raise your flag and ask a runner to summon the VRC Director or other VRC staff to answer the question.
Some volunteers will be required to take additional training for their particular work. Direct those volunteers to where that training is provided. When your briefing is concluded, explain where the volunteers should meet the transportation to their worksites, if transportation is provided.

File the attendance sheet for each class in a folder and turn them in to the VRC Director daily. If the content of your safety briefing changes (new material is added or safety instructions change), staple a

copy of the new safety training script to the attendance sheet of the first class in which the new script was used. Maintenance of these records is important to help protect the Coordinating Agency and local disaster officials from liability, should a volunteer be injured on the job.

Items needed:
• An ID Badge
• Sign (Station #5 Safety Training)
• Clipboard with attendance sheets
• Pen
• A supply of Safety Training handouts
• Stapler
• 10 or more chairs, preferably in a semi-circle so participants can all see one another
• List of additional training required by specific worksites, training locations and instructors
• Flag

Role: Planning Chief

Prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan to accomplish the objectives, collects and evaluates information, maintains resource status, and maintains documentation for incident records.

Serves as liaison with community organizations. Assesses need for additional recruiting of volunteers. Provides input for media messages

- ➔ This may be a point where volunteer management and social services overlap. The Office of Community Services may need to contact community organizations for their general needs and ask about their needs for volunteers and relay that to the volunteer management section.

Role: Logistics Chief

Provides support, resources, and all other services needed to meet the operational objectives. The logistics chief will arrange for:

- Location for center
- Food for volunteers at the VRC
- Phone lines
- Office supplies – paper, computer, write and wipe boards, etc.
- Who? Need someone from Information Services for technical needs, Need someone in city government who has Onecard and can make purchases.

Role: Finance/Administration Chief

Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses.

- Tracks number of volunteers handled by the center
- Calculates number of volunteer hours given by volunteers
- Tracks expenses related to operating the Volunteer Reception Center

Role: Public Information Officer

Prepares and distributes press releases in cooperation with overall PIO, handles media who visit the Volunteer Reception Center, updates website with information, or provides information to be posted online regarding volunteer activities. This role could be filled through the assistance of the Joint Information Center (JIC).